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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS INTERIM FORCE IN LEBANON

(for the period 16 January to 15 July 1998)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted in pursuance of Security Council resolution 1151 (1998) of 30 January 1998, by which the Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) for a further period of six months, until 31 July 1998. It covers developments since the previous report, dated 20 January 1998 (S/1998/53).

II. SITUATION IN THE AREA OF OPERATION

2. During the past six months, the number of operations conducted by armed elements against the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) and its local Lebanese auxiliary, the de facto forces (DFF), increased significantly. UNIFIL recorded 348 such operations (12 in the second half of January, 49 in February, 65 in March, 66 in April, 88 in May, 49 in June and 19 in the first half of July). This represents a 40 per cent increase over the previous reporting period and is the highest number in many years. There were also reports of about 300 operations north of the Litani River. The vast majority of those operations were carried out by the Islamic Resistance, the military wing of the Shiite Muslim Hizbullah organization. The Shiite movement Amal increased its activities, taking responsibility for about 60 operations. A number of operations were carried out by other Lebanese groups, while Palestinian groups conducted two operations. The armed elements employed small arms, mortars, rocket-propelled grenades, anti-tank missiles, recoilless rifles, rockets and explosive devices. They fired more than 3,500 mortar rounds, rockets and anti-tank missiles, as compared to about 2,500 rounds in the previous reporting period.

3. IDF/DFF, in response to attacks or in operations they initiated, employed artillery, mortars, tanks, helicopter gunships, fixed-wing aircraft and explosive devices. IDF continued its practice of conducting pre-emptive artillery bombardments and long-range patrols beyond its forward positions.

UNIFIL recorded close to 10,300 rounds of artillery, mortar, tanks and missiles fired by IDF/DFF, which was about the same level as in the last reporting period. IDF conducted air raids near Brashit on 2 July and near Yatar on 7 July. Another 58 air raids were carried out against targets north of the Litani River, including one on 12 May in which several members of a Palestinian group were killed. As before, the Israeli navy patrolled the Lebanese territorial waters in the south and continued to impose restrictions on local fishermen.

4. There was a decrease in civilian casualties during the reporting period. Twelve civilians were killed, as compared to thirty-four in the previous reporting period:

(a) In UNIFIL's area of operation, a civilian was killed near Majdal Zun by an explosive device planted by IDF/DFF on 5 February. On 14 February, five civilians were injured in Shihin by a shell or a rocket fired by unidentified persons. Two civilians were wounded in Brashit by IDF/DFF fire on 26 March. A serious incident occurred on 31 March when a truck transporting civilian labourers who had been working for IDF/DFF was hit near Kaoukaba by a roadside bomb placed by armed elements. Six of them were killed and another was wounded. On 6 April, a civilian was killed and three others wounded near Markabe by a roadside bomb planted by armed elements. On 25 and 27 April, two civilians were injured in Kafra and Zibqin, respectively, by IDF/DFF fire. On 8 May, six civilians were injured in Al Mansouri by IDF/DFF fire, three of them seriously. On 26 May, two civilians were injured, one in Yatar and one in Haddathah by IDF/DFF fire;

(b) A number of serious incidents were also reported from outside the area of operation. A civilian was killed by a roadside bomb near Jezzine on 27 January. On 2 April, a civilian was killed by IDF/DFF fire on the road between Aarab Salim and El Louaize. On 31 May, a civilian was killed and another was wounded near Aarab Salim by a rocket fired by IDF. On 19 June, a five-year-old boy was killed in Jezzine by a roadside bomb planted by armed elements while riding in a car with his father, a member of the DFF. There were other reports of civilian injuries caused by both armed elements and IDF/DFF.

5. Within the Israeli-controlled area (ICA), Israel continued to maintain a civil administration and security service. The infrastructure in the ICA (road system, electricity, water supply, public buildings) continued to be improved, primarily owing to aid provided by the Government of Lebanon. However, ICA remained economically dependent on Israel, where more than 2,500 of the inhabitants go to work every day.

6. IDF/DFF carried out search operations in several villages in ICA and, from time to time, restricted the movements of the inhabitants. A number of civilians were arrested and imprisoned in Khiam, while others were expelled from their villages and ordered to leave ICA. The inhabitants of Chebaa were particularly affected. On 25 and 26 June, the remains of an Israeli serviceman and those of armed elements were exchanged with the help of the International Committee of the Red Cross. In the context of this exchange, some 60 people imprisoned in Khiam were released. On 18 January, a local civilian employee of UNIFIL was arrested and sent to Khiam, but was released on the following day.

7. UNIFIL continued its efforts to limit the conflict and to protect the inhabitants from the fighting. Through its network of checkpoints and observation posts and an active programme of patrolling, as well as continuous contacts with the parties, the Force did its best to prevent the area of operation from being used for hostile activities and to defuse situations that could lead to escalation. The Force was also deployed, as necessary, to provide a measure of protection to villages and to farmers working in the fields.

8. In carrying out its functions, the Force at times encountered hostile reactions by both armed elements and IDF/DFF. On 17 January, two armed elements threatened United Nations personnel at a checkpoint. On 23 January, armed elements, whose cars had been stopped at a UNIFIL checkpoint, fired a number of small arms rounds, some of which impacted near the checkpoint. UNIFIL returned warning shots. On 22 March, armed elements fired a few rounds of small arms at United Nations armoured personnel carriers. On 24 April, armed elements threatened United Nations personnel at gunpoint. On 23 April, an IDF/DFF armoured personnel carrier caused damage to a United Nations checkpoint by attempting a forced entry. On 22 May, IDF/DFF members threatened to open fire at United Nations personnel who were monitoring their activities. UNIFIL strongly protested the above incidents.

9. In July 1996, UNIFIL obtained a commitment from IDF to respect a safety zone around UNIFIL positions and received assurances from the Islamic Resistance that they would not operate in the vicinity of UNIFIL positions. During the reporting period, both sides, by and large, showed restraint in this regard. However, on a number of occasions, armed elements did operate in the vicinity of United Nations positions. For example, on 2 and 3 July, in connection with a coordinated attack against several IDF/DFF positions, there were seven incidents of firing from locations near United Nations positions. UNIFIL protested these incidents through the Lebanese army. UNIFIL recorded a total of 72 firings at or close to its positions and personnel (25 by armed elements, 42 by IDF/DFF and 5 by unidentified elements). On 5 June, a mortar round fired by IDF/DFF impacted at a United Nations position and caused damage. On 13 July, two mortar rounds fired by IDF/DFF impacted near a United Nations position, injuring an Irish soldier as well as a Lebanese civilian who was passing nearby. UNIFIL promptly protested these and other incidents to the authorities concerned.

10. UNIFIL continued to extend assistance to the civilian population in its area of operation in the form of medical care, casualty evacuation, harvest patrols, the distribution of educational material and equipment to poorer schools and environment sanitation. In addition, water projects, equipment or services for schools and orphanages and supplies to social services and needy people were provided from resources made available by troop-contributing countries. UNIFIL medical centres and mobile teams provided care to an average of 4,000 civilian patients per month and a field dental programme treated approximately 200 cases per month. UNIFIL also assisted the Government of Lebanon in transporting and distributing supplies to villages in ICA when those villages faced shortages owing to restrictions imposed by IDF/DFF. Throughout the period, UNIFIL cooperated closely on humanitarian matters with the Lebanese authorities, United Nations agencies, the International Committee of the Red Cross and other organizations and agencies operating in Lebanon. As in the

past, UNIFIL continued the disposal of unexploded ordnance in its area of operation. In all, 69 controlled explosions were carried out.

11. The monitoring group set up in accordance with the understanding of 26 April 1996 held 16 meetings at UNIFIL headquarters to consider complaints by Israel and Lebanon. UNIFIL provided facilities for the meetings, as well as transport for the members of the group.

III. CONSULTATIONS WITH THE PARTIES

12. From 17 to 26 March 1998, I visited the Middle East, including Israel, Lebanon and Syria. The implementation of Security Council resolution 425 (1978) was discussed in my meetings with the leaders of the three countries and I used the opportunity to explore their views on the subject. I have since had further meetings in New York with the Prime Ministers of Israel and Lebanon and with officials of other interested countries.

13. On 1 April 1998, the Ministerial Committee for National Security of the Government of Israel adopted a decision on Israel's acceptance of resolution 425 (1978) (see S/1998/301). The decision stated, among other things, that Israel was accepting resolution 425 (1978) so that IDF would leave Lebanon with appropriate security arrangements and called on Lebanon to begin negotiations.

14. The Government of Lebanon, in the letter of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of 22 April to the President of the Security Council (S/1998/341), noted, among other things, that the Council had attached no security or political conditions to the implementation of resolution 425 (1978) and that the latter did not provide for negotiations. It stated that any negotiations between Lebanon and Israel could only be on subjects relating to resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and certain other subjects in the framework of the Arab-Israeli peace process. The Government of Syria has indicated that it shares these views.

IV. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

15. As at 30 June 1998, UNIFIL comprised 4,480 troops from Fiji (586), Finland (486), France (246), Ghana (644), Ireland (609), Italy (52), Nepal (601), Norway (625) and Poland (631). UNIFIL was assisted in its tasks by 55 military observers of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO). In addition, UNIFIL employed 463 civilian staff, of whom 130 were recruited internationally and 333 locally. Major-General Jioji Konousi Konrote continued as Force Commander. The deployment of UNIFIL is shown on the attached map.

16. On 18 June, the Government of Norway conveyed to me the decision to withdraw its infantry battalion from UNIFIL at the end of November 1998. I am in touch with potential contributors in order to obtain a replacement.

17. I regret to report the death of four members of the Force. A Polish soldier and a Ghanaian soldier died of natural causes on 17 January and 4 June respectively. On 4 June, two Nepalese soldiers were killed in a traffic

accident. Since the establishment of UNIFIL, 222 members of the Force have lost their lives: 76 as a result of firings or bomb explosions, 92 in accidents and 54 from other causes. A total of 332 have been wounded by firing, or by mine or bomb explosions.

18. UNIFIL maintained close contact with the Lebanese authorities on matters of mutual concern. Those authorities provided valuable assistance in connection with the rotation of troops and logistic activities in Beirut. The Lebanese army was helpful in defusing confrontations with armed elements. It also provided accommodation for some UNIFIL contingents while on leave in Lebanon. The Force continued to cooperate with the Lebanese Internal Security Forces on matters pertaining to the maintenance of law and order, including on an occasion of local elections.

19. The problem of the rents owed by the Government of Lebanon to the owners of the land and premises used by UNIFIL has still not been resolved. Not all owners have received payment and there is continuing controversy over the lists of owners prepared by the Lebanese authorities.

V. FINANCIAL MATTERS

20. By its resolution 52/237 of 26 June 1998, the General Assembly appropriated to the Special Account for UNIFIL an amount of $142,984,560 gross for the maintenance of the Force for the period from 1 July 1998 to 30 June 1999, based on an average strength of 4,513 troops and a continuation of its existing responsibilities. The assessment of the appropriation, which is equivalent to $11,915,380 gross per month, is subject to the decision of the Security Council to extend the mandate of the Force beyond 31 July 1998.

21. As at 30 June 1998, unpaid assessments to the Special Account for UNIFIL amounted to $103.5 million. The total unpaid assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations at that date amounted to $1.5 billion.

VI. OBSERVATIONS

22. During the past six months, fighting in south Lebanon continued and civilians were again put at risk, although the number of those who were killed decreased. UNIFIL continued its efforts to limit the conflict and to protect the inhabitants from the fighting. The situation in the area, however, remained volatile and continued to give cause for serious concern. I am also concerned at instances of harassment of United Nations personnel.

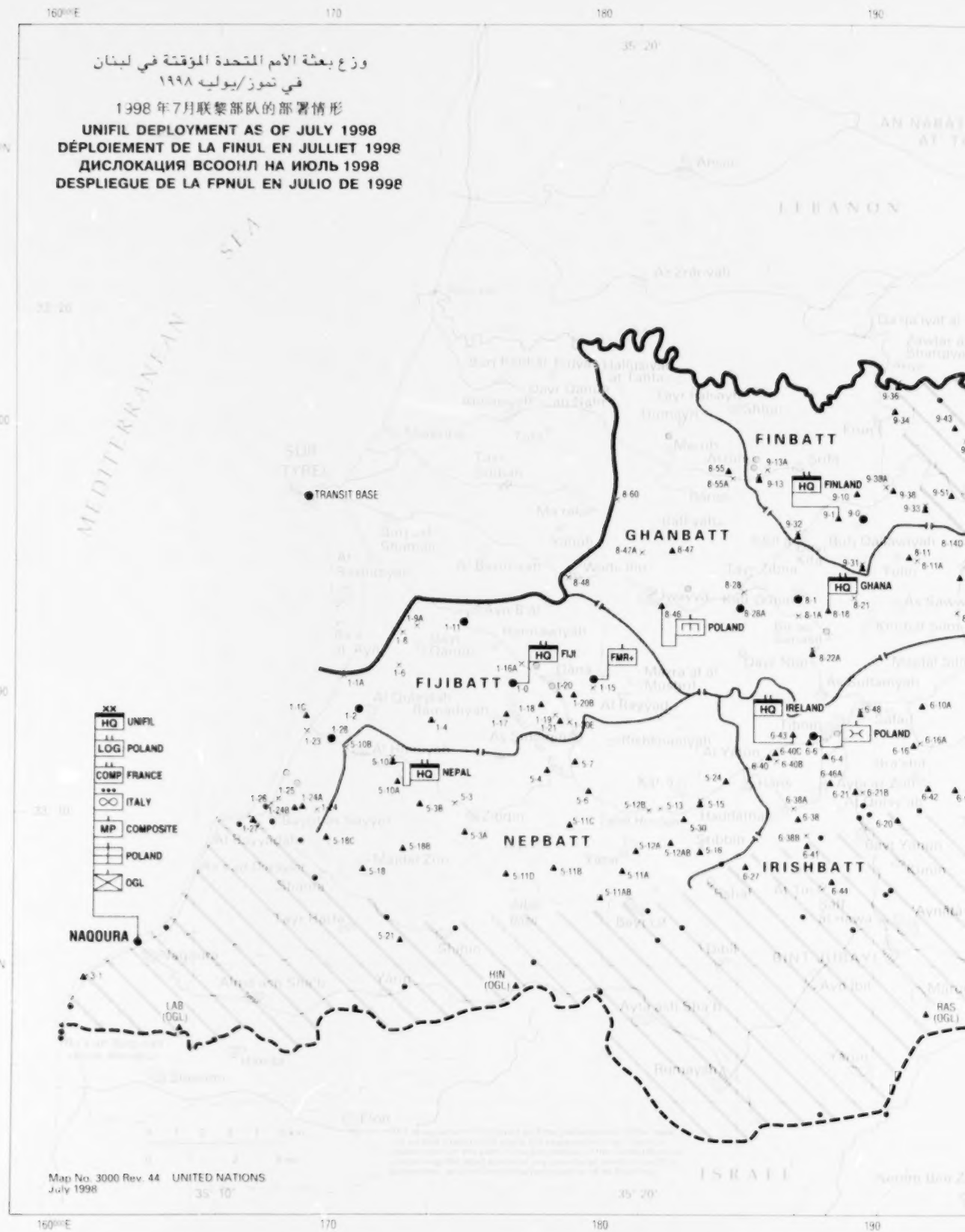
23. I have reported in paragraphs 12 to 14 above on my contacts concerning the implementation of resolution 425 (1978). I shall continue to follow developments closely and stay in touch with all concerned.

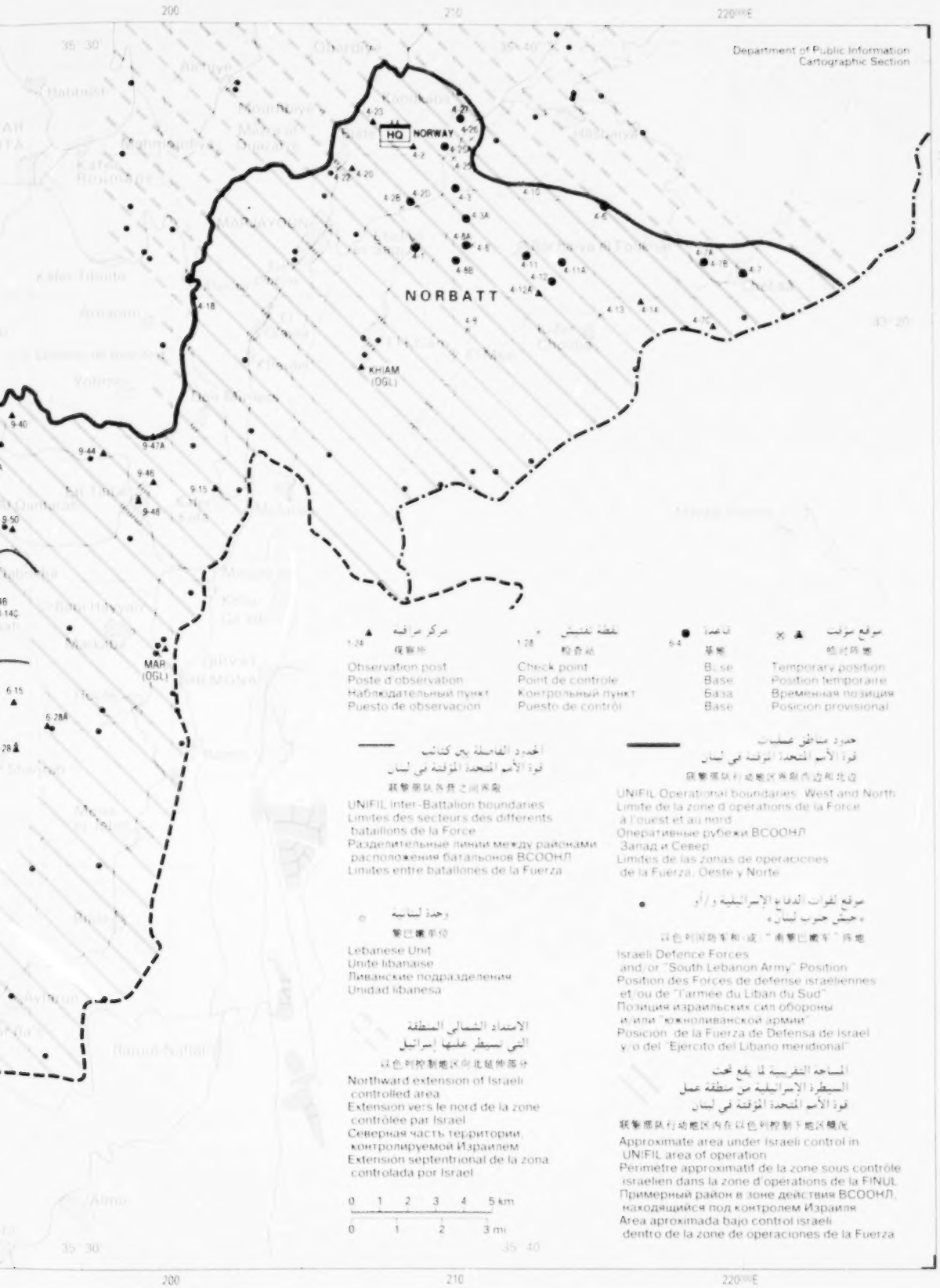
24. The Permanent Representative of Lebanon, in a letter addressed to me on 26 June 1998 (S/1998/584), conveyed his Government's request that the Security Council extend the mandate of UNIFIL for a further period of six months.

25. During my trip to the Middle East, I visited UNIFIL headquarters where I met with the Force Commander and his senior military and civilian staff. This visit reinforced my view that, although UNIFIL has been prevented from implementing the mandate contained in resolution 425 (1978), UNIFIL's contribution to stability and the protection it provides to the population of the area remain important. I therefore recommend that the Security Council respond positively to the request of the Government of Lebanon and extend the mandate of UNIFIL for another period of six months, until 31 January 1999.

26. I must again draw attention to the serious shortfall in the funding of the Force. At present, unpaid assessments amount to $103.5 million. I appeal to all Member States to pay their assessments promptly and in full and to clear all remaining arrears. I should also like to express my gratitude to the Governments contributing troops to the Force, in particular those of developing countries, for their understanding and patience in these difficult circumstances.

27. In conclusion, I wish to pay tribute to Major-General Jioji Konousi Konrote and to the men and women under his command for the manner in which they have carried out their difficult and often dangerous task. Their discipline and bearing have been of a high order, reflecting credit on themselves, on their countries and on the United Nations.


وزع بعثة الأمم المتحدة المؤقتة في لبنان
في تموز/يوليه ١٩٩٨
1998年7月联黎部队的部署情形
UNIFIL DEPLOYMENT AS OF JULY 1998
DÉPLOIEMENT DE LA FINUL EN JULLIET 1998
ДИСЛОКАЦИЯ ВСООНЛ НА ИЮЛЬ 1998
DESPLIEGUE DE LA FPNUL EN JULIO DE 1998
160°E
170
180
190
310°N
300
290
280°N
35° 20'
35° 10'
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
LEBANON
ISRAEL
TRANSIT BASE
NAQOURA
LAB (OGL)
HIN (OGL)
RAS (OGL)
FINBATT
GHANBATT
FIJIBATT
NEPBATT
IRISHBATT
HQ FINLAND
HQ GHANA
HQ FIJI
HQ NEPAL
HQ IRELAND
POLAND
FMR+
XX
HQ UNIFIL
LOG POLAND
COMP FRANCE
ITALY
MP COMPOSITE
POLAND
OGL
Map No. 3000 Rev. 44 UNITED NATIONS
July 1998



مركز مراقبة
观察所
Observation post
Poste d'observation
Наблюдательный пункт
Puesto de observación

نقطة تفتيش
检查站
Check point
Point de contrôle
Контрольный пункт
Puesto de control

قاعدة
基地
Base
Base
База
Base

موقع مؤقت
临时阵地
Temporary position
Position temporaire
Временная позиция
Posición provisional

الحدود الفاصلة بين كتائب
قوة الأمم المتحدة المؤقتة في لبنان
联黎部队各营之间界限
UNIFIL inter-Battalion boundaries
Limites des secteurs des différents bataillons de la Force
Разделительные линии между районами расположения батальонов ВСООНЛ
Limites entre batallones de la Fuerza

حدود مناطق عمليات
قوة الأمم المتحدة المؤقتة في لبنان
联黎部队行动地区西部和北边界线
UNIFIL Operational boundaries: West and North
Limite de la zone d'operations de la Force à l'ouest et au nord
Оперативные рубежи ВСООНЛ Запад и Север
Límites de las zonas de operaciones de la Fuerza, Oeste y Norte

وحدة لبنانية
黎巴嫩单位
Lebanese Unit
Unité libanaise
Ливанские подразделения
Unidad libanesa

موقع لقوات الدفاع الإسرائيلية و/أو «جيش جنوب لبنان»
以色列国防军和/或"南黎巴嫩军"阵地
Israeli Defence Forces and/or "South Lebanon Army" Position
Position des Forces de défense israéliennes et/ou de "l'armée du Liban du Sud"
Позиция израильских сил обороны и/или "южноливанской армии"
Posición de la Fuerza de Defensa de Israel y/o del "Ejército del Líbano meridional"

الامتداد الشمالي المنطقة التي تسيطر عليها إسرائيل
以色列控制地区向北延伸部分
Northward extension of Israeli controlled area
Extension vers le nord de la zone contrôlée par Israël
Северная часть территории, контролируемой Израилем
Extensión septentrional de la zona controlada por Israel

المساحة التقريبية لما يقع تحت السيطرة الإسرائيلية من منطقة عمل قوة الأمم المتحدة المؤقتة في لبنان
联黎部队行动地区内在以色列控制下地区概况
Approximate area under Israeli control in UNIFIL area of operation
Périmètre approximatif de la zone sous contrôle israélien dans la zone d'opérations de la FINUL
Примерный район в зоне действия ВСООНЛ, находящийся под контролем Израиля
Area aproximada bajo control israelí dentro de la zone de operaciones de la Fuerza

0 1 2 3 4 5 km
0 1 2 3 mi